

With comp. H.B.

× **ROTHBURY**
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

R E P O R T


OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER

FOR THE

Year ending 31st December, 1921.

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The Rothbury Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1921.

ROTHBURY,

20th March, 1922.

TO MR. GEORGE GREY, and GENTLEMEN.

Allow me to present you with this, my 26th Annual Report, for the year ending 31st December 1921.

The Census was taken in June, and your population which in 1911 was said to be 1150 was found to be 1682. In making the House Inspection in 1912 we found this was quite inaccurate. The inhabited houses, said to be 298, are now found to be 333 as we found them. It appears there were 194 visitors at the time of the census. Of these 1682 persons 769 were males and 913 females.

The rateable value at March, 1921, of your District was £6,966, and the assessable value £6,472. Your rate of $5/4$ in the £ realised £1,727 for Guardians purposes. For the District Council purposes the rate was at $2/5$ in the £ and produced £740 upon a value of £6,677. The Outdoor Relief for the entire Union was £465 against £306 for the previous year. There were 18 adults and 14 children, being 32 persons in all against 27 of last year. At the Union House there was an average daily residence

of 14 persons (7 males, 6 females and 1 child) with 14 feeble-minded belonging to Newcastle and paid for from there. There were 553 vagrants (males 531, females 15, children 7), against 208 of last year. There are none belonging to your District in the County Asylum, but 12 belonging to the whole Union.

The items of your indebtedness are : for **Sewerage**, laid down in 1910, with 19 years to run, at a cost of £5250 there is still left a debt of £3,236; there is paid off annually £179 of capital and £118 of interest—this entails a rate of about 1/- in the £, The **Cemetery**, conjoint with the Rothbury Rural part of the Parish, was formed in 1897 to extend 30 years at a cost of £1,580, and has now seven years to run. There is due £170; whilst £25 of capital and £6 of interest paid off annually which entails a rate of 3d.

• The **Workhouse** for the whole Union was built in 1905 at a cost of £5,180 borrowed for 40 years; it has 19 years to run. The debt at present is £1,736 and there is paid off annually £148 of capital and £60 of interest. Your District contributes one-eighth.

The **Number of Births** that occurred during the year was only 16 (8 males and 8 females) against 22 and 27 of the two preceding years, all belonged to the District and there were none born outside it who could have been here. The population being 1680 this is at a rate of only 9·5 per 1000 per annum; your previous average is 20·0. That for England and Wales is 22·4, being the lowest on record except 1920. There were born during the first quarter 8, second quarter 4, third quarter 2, and the last quarter 2. There was one born out of wedlock which survived its infancy. None of these 16 succumbed

before attaining one year of age, hence in infancy, thus it follows that the so called Infantile death rate is Nil; last year there was only one. Your previous average has been 75·0 per 1000 infants born. That for England and Wales is 83·0 being about the lowest and best on record. All births should now be forthwith notified to the County Medical Officer of Health, at Newcastle. The County Council now provide a Lady Health and Maternity Visitor who, for this district, resides in Rothbury. Of these children born during the year there were 14 successfully vaccinated being 80 per cent. The percentage for the two preceding years was 61·5 and 86·4 respectively.

The total number of **Deaths** registered in the District was 14, three of which died in the Union House, not belonging to the district; there were none to be transferred in, hence the total belonging to the District is only 11, being at the low rate of only 6·5 per 1000 per annum and is very satisfactory; that for England and Wales is only 12·1 being the lowest on record. Your average has been 15·1. Of the deaths, 4 were male and 7 females; the age periods were: under one year, Nil; from 15 to 25, 1; from 25 to 45, 2; from 45 to 65, 2; and above that, 6. Of these latter, the eldest was 88 years of age. They occurred; during February 2; March 4; June 3; August 1; and October 1.

As regards the **Causes of Deaths**, there were none due to the so called Zymotic or Epidemic class of diseases; these during the last 11 years, have been at a rate of 0·4.

Phthisis, (Tuberculosis of the Lungs), caused 2 death at the Union House. One, was one of the Feeble minded belonging to Newcastle, a female aged 20; the other, an itinerant worker on the Pipe Track, a male aged

24, having no abode. Your average rate has been 0·8 per 1000. Other forms of Tuberculosis did not cause any deaths. **Cancer** caused 2 deaths, both Males, and ages 64 and 75, both internal. There seems a little tendency to increase in this disease. I advice disinfecting the room afterwards. Other diseases of the **Chest** did not cause any; **Heart Disease** 1; Peritonitis 1; Apoplexy 3; Suicide (by hanging) 1 (a female) during temporary insanity. Other defined causes 2.

The Coroner held an inquest on the above woman.

There being 16 Births, and only 11 Deaths, it follows that the difference of 5, was added, naturally to the population, this is at a rate of 5·0. That for England and Wales is about 12·0.

There are 2 **Institutions** in your district, that receive persons who are ill into them, for purposes of treatment. (1) The **Cottage Hospital**, which admitted 10 Patients belonging the whole Union, of whom, 2 died. One of Peritonitis, the other of Heart disease; these belonged to the Urban district. There were also 31 Convalescents passed through, from outside the districts. (2) The **Union House** which had a daily average of 14 residents (see previous remarks), Two inmates died here, one of Phthisis, the other of Cancer, and had no fixed abode; and also 3 others two of whom belonging to the Rural district, and 1 to Newcastle, making 5 in all.

There were no persons of unsound mind belonging to your district, under treatment in the County Asylum. There were no proceedings before the Magistrates. There is no Common Lodging House now. The Coroner held one inquest as mentioned above.

Under the **Notification of Infectious Diseases Act**, there were none of the usually understood type notified.

Phthisis was notified in the 2 cases at the Union House, neither belonged to the district, and both died there. There were no cases of other forms of Tuberculosis notified. There is one case more or less under observation in the district.

The **Influenza** is never completely away now, one attack for a time, gives a certain amount of protection for a time, hence the plan of inoculation. At times it becomes more actively infectious, possibly under some climatic conditions, and when a certain number of unprotected are again ready to receive a fresh dose of infection. These outbursts then take the form of fresh epidemics. The complications with each of these frequently take differing types. We have not much of the dreaded Pneumonia type, but a good deal of Bronchial, and generally not serious in type.

Pneumonia has not been notified, and no cases of **Ophthalmia** in new born children. No cases of Tuberculosis in Cattle have been reported.

Bacteriological examination was only called for in one instance, in a visitor. It was a case of Phthisis, and was in a female, previously known of. I inspected and gave instructions.

The Isolation Hospital has not been used for several years now, and the Caretaker left in November. As there is great difficulty in getting another, the Committee decided to close it. There are 3 Beds in the old part

available for Small Pox ; and 8 in the New for other infectious diseases. It is maintained in conjunction with the Rural Board, you paying one-eighth of cost of upkeep.

The returns notified to me during the week, are regularly transmitted by me weekly, to the Ministry of Health, and to the County Medical Officer.

Under the **Factory and Workshops Act**. There are 3 businesses using machine power, viz: a Saw Mill, Ærated Water, and Printer, all in sanitary order. There are 16 Workshops, comprising, 3 Tailors, 2 Boot makers ; 2 Bakers ; 2 Cycle repairers ; 1 Plumber ; 1 Blacksmith ; 1 Sadler ; 1 Dressmaker ; 1 Milliner, where at length a w.c. has been provided. Also 1 Beer bottler ; 1 Photographer. All are in order. We made 34 visits. There are not any under ground bakeries, and no real outworkers.

Under the **Dairy and Cow Sheds Act**. No Milk is stored, all being disposed of immediately after Milking. All utensils are kept clean, and practically the Cow byres also, a few verbal notices being given and attended to. They are paved, channelled, drained, ventilated, and good water supply. The Cows are let out on to the pastures at every possible opportunity, being little in, except at night in winter. The door are freely left open. Situated in the district, there are 8 persons keeping Cows, and selling Milk. They keep 26 Cows, 21 Milking, and supply 100 customers with 126 Quarts (31 Gallons) daily. There are 2 Farmers, living outside the district, who send retail supplies into it. They are at Snitter Lane and the Wag Tail, where all is in order. They keep 22 Cows (20 milking), supplying 190 Costumers with 160 Quarts of Milk. They all deliver to the door, and the price varied

from 7d to 10d per Quart. We made 50 visits. There were no Cows reported Tubercular. A large amount of Tinned Condensed Milk is used in the District. No Mothers have applied to the Council for Milk.

The **Slaughter Houses**, are again 3 in number. A pre-existing one has been re-opened, and is in good order (Black). The other two are kept tidy, one needs offal removed more often. The other is too close in to house back door.

The **Schools**. Sharp's **Secondary School** has 62 Scholars. The lighting is not good, and building generally not up to date. Very serious financial difficulties have arisen. A Tree has been cut down. The Thomlinson's, **Elementary Schools**, has accommodation for 350 Scholars, there were only 132 on the books, in 1913 there were 175. A few slight defects were rectified, all being in order.

The **Water Supplies**, that to the Hillside, a private one, was quite unsatisfactory, being pumped up 350 feet by Engine, very expensive, pipes leaking at times, and often short, it was cut off from most users, and only to some privileged ones. The other Water Company have been asked to provided a supply, but don't seem inclined to do so. Your Council have now bought this Hillside concern, for the low price of £250, subject to consent of the Ministry of Health. They have offered to buy the original Water Company business, but have not met with success so far. The Directors have been met, and a Public Meeting was held, sanctioning the schemes. Further steps are being taken. The Tynemouth Committee seem now to have retired, and let ours alone.

The **Sewerage Scheme** works quite satisfactory. One of the Tanks needed top cleared off, which was done. Your Inspector looks carefully after this. The outflow is good and clear.

The **House Scavengering** is done by the occupiers, in some cases with difficulty, and others not too efficiently. Some day I hope the Council may see their way to do this by contract, or otherwise, themselves. The roads are attended to.

The **House Inspection Act** was completed in 1912. Only 2 houses were found not fit to occupy, and this was rectified. A few, chiefly in the Malting Yard, from time to time need repairs, due to Tenants dilapidations. The Owners put these right, on being asked. A good many houses still keep changing ownership, when alterations and repairs are made, with additions. A good many pass into the hands of owners who come out mostly in summer, and thus help to make a shortage for our own people who are residents. Two new good houses are being built on the Hillside.

The **Housing of the Working Classes Act**, our survey was completed in 1912. There were 14 Houses with a population of over 2 on an average per room. Some workers at the Lee Colliery are living here : 10 new ones have been built there, and this may relieve our pressure. A few houses built for bona fide working men, would be an advantage, but these cannot be built to pay at present prices. According to the 1921 Census, in June, there are 333 Houses in the District, occupied by 1682 persons, (194 were visitors). There was evidently some mistake in the 1911 Census, the houses there being 293, and population 1147. In our survey 1912, we found 333 Houses occupied

by about 1500 persons. There were 14 then not occupied, none now. There were 196 below a yearly rental of £16. The General Death rate is 6·5 per 1000 per annum, and that for Phthisis is 0·3 on the average of 12 years. The Infant Mortality this year is Nil; the previous average was 75·0 per 1000 born. We inspected the 333 Houses, and found 196 of the Working Class standard. No new ones have been built this year. 2 were unfit to occupy, and 3 others less so. All these 5 were rectified, after notices served upon the Owners. They remedied them themselves.

Your Inspector regularly goes over portions of the district reporting to each meeting of the Board.

I am indebted to Miss Hudson of Cragside, for the following particulars concerning the Rainfall &c. taken there 405 feet above the Sea level.

	Rainfall in inches	Number of Wet Days	Hours Sunshine
JANUARY	.. 5·03	17	41
FEBRUARY	... 0·46	5	62
MARCH ...	... 1·34	18	110
APRIL ..	... 0·79	10	88
MAY ...	... 2·34	14	112
JUNE ...	.. 0·52	6	175
JULY ...	... 1·87	11	151
AUGUST ...	... 4·54	21	108
SEPTEMBER	... 1·91	9	145
OCTOBER ...	... 2·61	8	111
NOVEMBER	... 3·25	18	71
DECEMBER	... 2·07	16	51
TOTALS	... 26·73	151	1230

This is a good deal below the average of 32·70 inches, for 25 years. From February till August very little fell. The back end of the year was very wet and little sunshine.

Your obedient servant,

F. BARROW,

Medical Officer of Health

